

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES (DHHS)

Program Announcement No. AoA-01-05

Older Americans Act Title IV Discretionary Program Announcement and Application Kit

Administration on Aging (AoA)

**ACTION:** Announcement that grant awards will be made to support **National Legal Assistance and Elder Rights Projects**, as authorized by Title IV, Section 420 of the Older Americans Act (the Act), as amended (P.L. 106-501). The accompanying set of materials comprises the **application kit** for preparing and submitting grant proposals.

**SUMMARY:** AoA announced in the May 23, 2001, *Federal Register* that it will hold a competition for grant awards to support projects aimed at building and strengthening the national system of legal assistance and improving the quality and accessibility of the legal assistance provided to older people.

This program announcement consists of two parts. *Part I* provides background information, describes the priority areas under which AoA is inviting applications to be considered for funding, and describes the process governing the consideration of project applications for funding. *Part II* provides guidance on how to prepare and submit an application.

All of the forms (Standard Form 424), Assurances, and Certifications necessary to complete the application are included following Part II. Grant awards are subject to the availability of funds.

**DATE:** The deadline date for the submission of applications is **July 9, 2001**.

**ADDRESS:** Application receipt point: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Aging, Office of Management, Division of Grants Management, 330 Independence Avenue, S.W., Wilbur J. Cohen Building, Room 4257, Washington, DC 20201, Attn: AoA-01-05.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Brandt Chvirko, Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Aging, Office of State and Community Programs, 330 Independence Avenue, S.W., Room 4751, Washington, DC 20201, telephone: (202) 619-0067 or (202) 619-0011, e-mail: brandt.chvirko@aoa.gov.

## **Part I. Background Information and Priority Area Description**

### **A. Statutory Authority**

The statutory authority for awards made under this program announcement area is contained in Title IV of the Act, (42 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.), as amended on November 13, 2000 (P.L. 106-501).

### **B. Eligible Applicants**

Under Section 420(c) of the Act as amended in 2000, applicants must be national nonprofit organizations experienced in providing support and technical assistance on a nationwide basis to states, area agencies on aging, legal assistance providers, ombudsmen, elder abuse prevention programs, and other organizations interested in the legal rights of older individuals.

Any non-profit organization applying under this program competition that is not now a DHHS grantee should include, with its application, Internal Revenue Service or other legally recognized documentation of its non-profit status. A non-profit applicant cannot be funded without this proof.

AoA expects to fund three to five projects under this program announcement. The federal share of project costs is expected to range from \$150,000 to \$250,000 per year depending upon the scope of the component elements of the national legal assistance support system proposed by an approved applicant. Projects may not exceed three years.

### **C. Priority Area Description**

#### **1. Background**

While conditions for older Americans have improved markedly since initial passage of the Act, many seniors still are denied their basic rights and benefits, and suffer abusive situations ranging from financial exploitation to severe neglect. They may need advocacy on their behalf because their physical or mental disabilities, social isolation, limited educational attainment or limited financial resources prevent them from being able to protect, or advocate for, themselves.

AoA is soliciting applications under this program announcement to carry out National Legal Assistance and Elder Rights Projects. These projects are aimed at building and strengthening the national system of legal assistance in support of the vulnerable elder rights protection activities of state and area agencies on aging and of improving the quality and accessibility of the legal assistance provided to older people.

## 2. Project Objectives and Activities

Title IV, Section 420 of the Act specifies four component activities of a national legal assistance support system. Each activity is a valuable resource in developing systems of legal assistance for older people, and in improving the quality and accessibility of such services, as part of the overall system of services for older people. AoA expects that the projects funded under this program announcement will encompass one or more of these four components:

### *(1) Case Consultations.*

Grantee will provide case consultation to Title III legal assistance providers. The grantee will document and analyze issues and cases that have precedent setting implications and make that information available to legal service providers and state and area agencies on aging nationwide.

### *(2) Training.*

The applicant will provide for the education and training of professionals, volunteers, and/or older individuals concerning elder rights, the requirements and benefits of specific laws, and methods for enhancing the coordination of services.

### *(3) Provision of substantive legal advice and assistance.*

Grantee will provide substantive legal advice on issues of importance to older individuals. The substantive areas include, but are not limited to, health care, long-term care, abuse and neglect, guardianship, housing, insurance benefits, age discrimination, utilities, consumer protection, and public benefits. The grantee should identify a suitable reporting format (newsletter, issue brief, policy paper, etc.) and dissemination plan.

### *(4) Assistance in the design, implementation, and administration of legal assistance delivery and elder rights advocacy systems to local providers of legal assistance for older individuals.*

Grantees will work with state and area agencies on aging to expand and improve delivery of legal assistance services and elder rights advocacy programs statewide. Grantee must demonstrate how regular on-going assistance and consultation will be provided in areas such as targeting, access, reporting, development of outcome measures, selection of providers, priority setting, and use of pro bono resources and volunteers.

#### D. General Requirements

**The following requirements apply to all proposals. Applicants should review their proposals against the list of requirements to ensure that each requirement has been addressed in the proposal.**

##### 1. Project Planning Process

- Applicants are expected to demonstrate a familiarity with the history, extant literature, current status, and policy considerations bearing on the development of legal assistance programs and the roles of the national, state, and local agencies responsible for their operation.
- Priority will be given to projects that address two or more of the four component elements specified in Title IV, Section 420 of the OAA: Case Consultations; Training; Provision of substantive legal advice and assistance; and Assistance in the design, implementation, and administration of legal assistance delivery and elder rights advocacy systems to local providers of legal assistance for older individuals.
- New and innovative approaches to improving legal assistance and the use of new technologies will be viewed positively in evaluating grant applications.
- Applicants are expected to present a clear connection between identified system gaps and needs and the proposed activities. Proposals should clearly describe the nature of the activities to be undertaken, how they address system gaps and identified issues, and how they will assist in achieving overall project goals and objectives. Clarification as to why these specific activities were selected is appropriate (i.e. has this approach been successful in other settings? Does the research suggest this direction?).
- Applicants should indicate a plan for achieving national coverage and provide detailed descriptions of specific products or outcomes proposed for development or modification.
- AoA views its obligation to measure performance under the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) as an opportunity to demonstrate that the grants administered under this announcement will produce intended results, such as: 1) strengthening the national system of legal assistance and 2) improving the quality and accessibility of the legal assistance provided to older people. To that end, the grantor is seeking applicant input regarding quantitative indicators of program effectiveness. Grantees will work with AoA to develop performance measures that the agency can use to assess and demonstrate the effectiveness of resource center activities and work products. This information will satisfy AoA's GPRA obligation, demonstrate the value of the grantees' programs, and help guide their continuous improvement efforts.

- Applicants are expected to provide a time-line chart to list project activities in chronological order and to show the target dates for the projected accomplishments.

## 2. Project Implementation & Management

- Applicants should describe their dissemination plan and anticipated products. AoA expects that nationwide dissemination of products and knowledge will occur.
- When training is a significant component of the proposal, AoA expects to see a detailed training plan, including who is to be trained, who will provide the training and their general qualifications, and how the training addresses identified service and system gaps.
- Projects must be cost-effective and programmatically efficient, maximizing Federal, state and local resources.
- All grantees are expected to interact at least quarterly via conference call and attend a yearly meeting in Washington, D.C. organized by AoA.

## 3. Reporting

- Grantees are required to submit two progress reports each year. A final project report is due 90 days after the completion of the grant project.
- Organizations must have adequate capacity to meet all reporting requirements and time lines. Failure to meet reporting requirements will result in suspension or termination of the grant or cooperative agreement.

## E. Evaluation Criteria

An independent review panel made up of at least three people will evaluate the applications. These reviewers are drawn from academic institutions, non-profit organizations, state and local government, and federal government agencies other than AoA. Based on the specific programmatic considerations set forth in this program announcement, the reviewers will comment on and score the applications, focusing their comments and scoring decisions on the criteria below.

Applications are scored by assigning a maximum of 100 points across four criteria:

1. Purpose and Need for Assistance Weight: 25 points
  - a. Does the proposed project proposal clearly and fully respond to the substantive components of the program announcement regarding the functions and activities of the National Legal Assistance and Elder Rights Projects? (Sub-weight, 15 points).
  - b. Does the project proposal demonstrate a thorough understanding of legal assistance programs and the roles of the national, state, and local agencies responsible for their operation? (Sub-weight, 10 points).
2. Approach /Method – Work Plan and Activities Weight: 30 points
  - a. Is the project work plan clear and comprehensive? Does it systematically include specific and realistic objectives and tasks? (Sub-weight, 15 points).
  - b. Is a well-ordered and sensible timeline for the accomplishment of tasks and objectives presented? Are the sequence and timing of events logical and realistic? (Sub-weight, 5 points).
  - c. Are the roles and contributions of project staff, consultants, and collaborative organizations clearly defined and linked to specific objectives and tasks? Does the work plan specify who would be responsible for such tasks as: leadership of the project; preparation of reports and products; communications with AoA; and dissemination of projects results/products? (Sub-weight, 10 points).
3. Anticipated Outcomes and Dissemination Weight: 20 points
  - a. Are the expected benefits/results clear, realistic, and consistent with the objectives and purpose of the project? Are the anticipated outcomes of the project likely to be achieved and will they significantly benefit older people and improve legal assistance and elder rights programs? (Sub-weight, 13 points).
  - b. Does the proposal include a plan for dissemination that is likely to promote a timely awareness among interested parties of the project's activities and events during salient stages of the project? Is this plan adequate for disseminating the project products to all appropriate audiences? (Sub-weight, 7 points).

4. Level of Effort Weight: 25 points

- a. Do the proposed project director, key staff and consultants have the background, experience, and other qualifications required to carry out their designated roles? Is the time commitment of the proposed director sufficient to assure proper direction, management and completion of the project? Is the time commitment of other key staff sufficient to assure completion of the tasks proposed for the project? (Sub-weight: 13 points).
- b. Is the budget justified with respect to the adequacy and reasonableness of resources requested? Are budget line items consistent with work plan objectives? (Sub-weight: 7 points).
- c. Are letters from participating organizations included, as appropriate, and do they express the clear commitment and areas of responsibility of those organizations, consistent with the work plan description of their intended roles and contributions? (Sub-weight: 5 points).

F. Budget Instructions and Match Information

This section provides information and instructions on grantee match requirements and calculations, indirect costs, and guidance for completing SF424A & B, required budget forms. Also included are instructions for the required budget justification.

1. Grantee Share of the Project

Under this and similar demonstration programs, AoA does not make grant awards for the entire project cost. Successful applicants must, at a minimum, contribute one (1) dollar, secured from non-federal sources, for every three (3) dollars received in federal funding. The non-federal share must equal at least 25% of the total project cost. Thus, if the applicant requests federal support for \$150,000, its match must be at least \$50,000.

There are two exceptions to this cost sharing formula. First, for applications submitted by Tribal Organizations the non-federal share must equal at least 20% of total project costs. Second, applicants from the Virgin Islands, the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, or Guam are covered by Section 501(d) of Public Law 95-134, as amended, which requires the Department to waive "any requirement for local matching funds under \$200,000."

The non-federal share of total project costs for each budget period may be in the form of cash from non-Federal sources, grantee-incurred direct or indirect costs, third party in-kind contributions, and/or project-related income. Indirect costs may not exceed those allowed under federal rules established, as appropriate, by OMB Circulars A-21, A-87, and A-122.

If the required non-federal share is not met by a funded project, AoA will disallow any unmatched federal dollars. A common error is to match 25% of the federal share rather than 25% of the entire project cost. Failure to provide the required non-Federal match will result in the loss of Federal funds. No waivers of the non-Federal share are available.

## **2. Indirect Costs**

Indirect costs generally may be requested only if the applicant has a negotiated indirect cost rate with the Department's Division of Cost Allocation or with another federal agency. Applicants without a negotiated indirect cost rate may apply for one in accordance with DHHS procedures and relevant OMB Circulars.

## **3. SF 424A - Budget Information**

This form (SF424A) is designed to apply for funding under more than one grant program; thus, for purposes of this AoA program, many of the budget item columns/blocks are not applicable to this project. *The applicant should consider and respond to only the budget items for which guidance is provided below.*

### **Forms Instructions:**

#### **a. SF 424A, Section A - Budget Summary**

Section A - Budget Summary and Section B - Budget Categories should include both federal and non-federal funding for the proposed project covering the first 12 months of the project period.

On line 5, enter total federal Costs in column (e) and total non-federal Costs (including third party in-kind contributions and any program income to be used as part of the grantee match) in column (f). Enter the total of columns (e) and (f) in column (g).

#### **b. Section B - Budget Categories**

Use only the last column under Section B, namely the column headed Total (5), to enter the total requirements for funds (combining both the federal and non-federal shares) by object class category.

### **Budget Justification**

A more detailed explanation of the proposed budget should be provided in a budget justification section, including an explanation of costs listed in line f, Contractual. In that budget justification, consider including an overall budget breakdown which shows in three columns all of the budget cost items by federal, non-federal, and total funds.



The rest of this separate budget presentation should fully explain and justify each of the major budget items: personnel, travel, other, etc., as outlined below. Again, be sure to provide a breakdown of costs (such as personnel, travel, equipment, etc) for all contractual services.

The column for non-federal funds shown for any of the budget line items in the budget justification sheet reflects only cash match contributions (see instructions below for item 15 on the face sheet of the 424 Form). Third party in-kind contributions and program income designated as non-federal match contributions should be identified and justified separately from the justification for the budget line items.

The full budget justification (allow up to four pages) should be included in the application immediately following the SF 424 forms.

SF 424A, Line 6a - Personnel: Enter total costs of salaries and wages of applicant/grantee staff. Do not include the costs of consultants, which should be included under 6h - Other. Justification: Identify the project director, if known. Specify the key staff, their titles, brief summary of project related duties, and time commitments in the budget justification. Specify both the percentage of time and dollar amount attributed to administrative functions.

SF 424A, Line 6b - Fringe Benefits: Enter the total costs of fringe benefits unless treated as part of an approved indirect cost rate.

Justification: Provide a break-down of amounts and percentages that comprise fringe benefit costs, such as health insurance, FICA, retirement insurance, etc. Indicate the percentage and dollar amount of fringe benefits attributed as administrative costs.

SF 424A, Line 6c - Travel: Enter total costs of out-of-town travel (travel requiring per diem) for staff of the project. Do not enter costs for consultant's travel or local transportation. Consultant travel should be listed in line 6h.

Justification: Include the total number of trips, destinations, purpose, length of stay, subsistence allowances and transportation costs (including mileage rates). Indicate the percentage and dollar amount of travel attributed to administrative costs.

SF 424A, Line 6d - Equipment: Enter the total costs of all equipment to be acquired by the project. For all grantees, "equipment" is non-expendable tangible personal property having a useful life of more than two years and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit.

Justification: Equipment to be purchased with federal funds must be justified as necessary for the conduct of the project. The equipment, or a reasonable facsimile, must not be otherwise available to the applicant or its sub-grantees. The justification also must contain plans for the use or disposal of the equipment after the project ends. Purchase of the equipment must be for project related functions and not solely for administrative activities.

SF 424A, Line 6e - Supplies: Enter the total costs of all tangible expendable personal property (supplies) other than those included on line 6d.

Justification: Provide general description of types of items included. Copying charges should be included here, but printing costs should be listed in 6h.

SF 424A, Line 6f - Contractual: Enter the total costs of all contracts, including (1) procurement contracts (except those which belong on other lines such as equipment, supplies, etc.) and, (2) contracts with secondary recipient organizations including delegate agencies. Also include any contracts with organizations for the provision of technical assistance. Do not include payments to individuals on this line.

Justification: Attach a list of contractors indicating the name of the organization, the purpose of the contract, and the estimated dollar amount.

If the name of the contractor, scope of work, and estimated costs are not available or have not been negotiated, indicate when this information will be available. **Whenever the applicant/grantee intends to delegate a substantial part (one-third, or more) of the project work to another agency, the applicant/grantee must provide a completed copy of Section B, Budget Categories for each contractor, along with supporting information and justifications.**

SF 424A, Line 6g - Construction: Leave blank since new construction and renovations/repairs are not allowable costs for this program.

SF 424A, Line 6h - Other: Enter the total of all other costs. Such costs, where applicable, may include, but are not limited to: insurance, medical and dental costs (i.e. for project volunteers this is different from personnel fringe benefits); non-contractual fees and travel paid directly to *individual* consultants; local transportation (all travel which does not require per diem is considered local travel); postage; space and equipment rentals/lease; printing and publication; computer use; training and staff development costs (i.e. registration fees). If a cost does not clearly fit under another category, and it qualifies as an allowable cost, then rest assured this is where it belongs.

Justification: Provide a reasonable explanation for items in this category. For individual consultants, explain the nature of services provided and the relation to activities in the work plan. Describe the types of activities for staff development costs. Indicate the percentage and dollar amount of activities attributed as administrative costs (use definition above).

SF 424A, Line 6i - Total Direct Charges: Show the totals of Lines 6a through 6h.

Justification: In the justification, note the total direct project costs, the percentage and total dollar amount attributed to direct provision of services, and the percentage and total dollar amount attributed to administrative costs.

SF 424A, Line 6j - Indirect Charges: Enter the total amount of indirect charges (costs), if any. If no indirect costs are requested, enter "none." Indirect charges may be requested if: (1) the applicant has a current indirect cost rate agreement approved by the DHHS or another federal agency; or (2) the applicant is a state government agency. State governments should enter the amount of indirect costs determined in accordance with DHHS requirements

SF 424A, Line 6k - Total: Enter the total amounts of Lines 6i and 6j.

SF 424A, Line 7 - Program Income/Third Party In-kind: Include on line 7 any third party in-kind contributions being proposed as part of the grantee match. Also, as appropriate, estimate the amount of income, if any, expected to be generated from this project that you wish to designate as match (equal to the amount shown for Item 15(f) on Form 424).

**Note:** Any program income indicated at the bottom of Section B and for item 15(f) on the face sheet of Form 424 will be included as part of non-Federal match and will be subject to the rules for documenting completion of this pledge.

If program income is expected, but is not needed to achieve matching funds, do **not** include that portion here or on Item 15(f) of the Form 424 face sheet. Any anticipated program income that will not be applied as grantee match should be described in the Level of Effort section of the Program Narrative.

c. SF 424A, Section C - Non-Federal Resources

SF 424A, Line 12 - Totals: Enter amounts of non-federal resources that will be used in carrying out the proposed project. Do not include program income unless it is used to meet match requirements. Keep in mind that if program income used to meet match requirements and the projected level of program income is not met, thereby decreasing the level of match, the amount of federal funds available to the grantee may be reduced if the match falls below required levels.

d. SF 424A, Section D - Forecasted Cash Needs: Not applicable.

e. SF 424A, Section E - Budget Estimate of Federal Funds Needed for Balance of the Project. Complete this section since the total project period encompasses three funding periods. These figures should correspond to activities set forth in the proposed work plan.

SF 424A, Line 20 - Totals: Enter the estimated required federal funds (exclude estimates of the amount of cost sharing) for the period covering months 13 through 24 (if applicable) under column (b) First, and for the period covering months 25 through 36 (if applicable) under column (c).

SF 424A, Section F - Other Budget Information

SF 424A, Line 21 - Direct Charges: Not applicable

SF 424A, Line 22 - Indirect Charges: Enter the type of indirect rate (provisional, predetermined, final or fixed) to be in effect during the funding period, the base to which the rate is applied, and the total indirect costs.

SF 424A, Line 23 - Remarks: Provide any other comments deemed necessary.

## **Part II. Information and Guidelines for the Application Process and Review**

Part II of this application kit contains general information for potential applicants and basic guidelines for submitting applications to compete for the **National Legal Assistance and Elder Rights Projects**. Application forms are provided along with detailed instructions for preparing the application package for submittal to the AoA.

### **A. Deadline for Submission of Applications**

The closing date for submission of applications is July 9, 2001. Applications must be postmarked by midnight July 9, 2001, or hand-delivered by 5:30 p.m. Eastern Time on July 9, 2001 to:

Department of Health and Human Services  
Administration on Aging  
Office of Management, Division of Grants Management  
330 Independence Avenue, S.W., Room 4257  
Washington, D.C. 20201  
Attn: AoA-01-05

Hand-delivered applications are accepted during the working hours of 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Eastern Time, Monday through Friday. The above address is in a secured building. It will **not** be sufficient to leave the application at the guard station. In order to gain entrance, after you are at the guard station, you may call (202) 619-0011. An AoA staff person will conduct you to Room 4257. An application will meet the deadline if it is either:

1. Received at the mailing address on or before the applicable deadline date; or
2. Sent before midnight of the applicable deadline date as evidenced by either 1) a U.S. Postal Service receipt or postmark or 2) a receipt from a commercial carrier. AoA must receive the application in time to be considered under the competitive independent review mandated by Chapter 1-62 of the DHHS Grants Administration Manual. Applicants are strongly advised to obtain proof that the application was sent by the applicable deadline date. If there is a question as to when the application was sent, applicants will be asked to provide proof that they have met the applicable deadline date. Private metered postmarks are not proof of a timely submittal.

Applications that do not meet the above deadlines are considered late applications. The AoA Office of Management, Division of Grants Management will notify each applicant if its application will not be considered as part of this review and competition.

AoA may extend the July 9, 2001 deadline for applications because of acts of God, such as floods, hurricanes or earthquakes, when there is widespread disruption of the mail, or when AoA determines an extension to be in the best interest of the government.

Depending upon the precipitating factor(s), the extension will apply to all potential applicants in the area affected by the natural disaster, or to all potential applicants across the nation. Should there be an extension of the application, a notice to that effect will be published in the Federal Register.

B. Review Process and Consideration for Funding

Within the limits of available federal funds, AoA makes financial assistance awards consistent with the purposes of the statutory authority governing this grant program, as cited above. The following steps are involved in the review process:

- 1) Notification: Applicants will be notified of the receipt of their application and informed of the identification number assigned to it if the applicant submits the appropriate information on the enclosed yellow postcard.
- 2) Screening: To ensure that minimum standards of equity and fairness have been met, applications that do not meet the screening criteria outlined in Section D below, will not be reviewed and will receive no further consideration for funding.
- 3) Expert Review: Applications that conform to the requirements of this program announcement will be reviewed and scored competitively against the evaluation criteria specified in Part I, Section D. This independent review is performed by panels consisting of qualified persons from outside the federal government, and by knowledgeable non-AoA federal government officials. The scores and comments of the reviewers are major factors in award decisions.
- 4) Other Comments: AoA may solicit views and comments on pending applications from other federal departments and agencies, interested foundations, national organizations, experts, and others, for the consideration of the Assistant Secretary for Aging in making funding decisions.
- 5) Other Funding Sources: AoA reserves the option of discussing applications with, or referring them to, other federal or non-federal funding sources when this is determined to be in the best interest of the federal government or the applicant.
- 6) Decision-Making Process: After the review panel session, AoA staff may contact applicants to obtain additional information. These applicants should not assume that funding is guaranteed. An award is official only upon receipt of the Financial Assistance Award.
- 7) Timeframe: Applicants should be aware that the time between the deadline for submission of applications and the grant award might take several months. This length of time is required to review and process project applications.

C. Notification Under Executive Order 12372

This is not a covered program under Executive Order 12372.

D. Application Screening Requirements

All applications will be screened to assure a level playing field for all applicants. Applications that fail to meet any one of the screening criteria below will **not** be reviewed and will receive **no** further consideration.

In order for an application to be reviewed, it must meet the following screening requirements:

1. Applications must be postmarked by midnight July 9, 2001, or hand-delivered by 5:30 p.m. Eastern Time on July 9, 2001 to:

Department of Health and Human Services  
Administration on Aging  
Office of Management, Division of Grants Management  
330 Independence Avenue, S.W., Room 4257  
Washington, D.C. 20201  
Attn: AoA-01-05

2. The proposal provides for the appropriate and required match for the first year of funding.
3. The application is **no more than 30 single-sided pages**, double-spaced as detailed below in Section E. “Proposal Format”.

**Only those applications meeting these screening requirements will be reviewed and eligible for funding.**

E. Proposal Format

All applications must adhere to the following requirements in preparing the application:

1. The application must **not** exceed *30-pages, single-sided, double-spaced*, exclusive of certain required forms and assurances that are listed below. *Please note that this requirement also appears as screening criteria.* Fonts **no smaller than** 10pt Arial or 12pt Times Roman are required, with at least one-inch (1”) margins on all sides.
2. The following documents are excluded from the 30-page limitation:
  - Standard Form (SF) 424
  - SF 424A (including up to a four-page budget justification)

- the certification forms regarding lobbying; debarment, suspension, and other responsibility matters; and drug-free workplace requirements
  - indirect cost agreements.
3. The following portions of the application are included in the 30-page limitation:
    - Summary description (length: not to exceed 1200 characters);
    - Narrative (approximate length: 15 – 20 pages);
    - Timeline for accomplishment of proposed tasks (approximate length: 1 - 3 pages)
    - Applicant's capability statement, including an organization chart, and vitae for key project personnel (approximate length 4 - 8 pages) and;
    - Essential letters of commitment and cooperation (approximate length: 4 - 8 pages).
  4. Please have the narrative typed, double-spaced, on one side of 8 1/2" x 11" plain white paper with 1" margins on all sides. All pages of the narrative (including charts, tables, etc.) should be sequentially numbered, beginning with "Objectives and Need for Assistance" as page number two (2). At the close of the project narrative, please identify the author(s) of the proposal, their relationship with the applicant agency, and the role they will play, if any, should the project be funded. The application should not be bound. A staple is recommended.
  5. Beginning with the page for the project summary description, pages must be numbered sequentially. Please do not use covers or tabs. Do not include extraneous materials such as agency promotion brochures, slides, tapes, film clips, etc. It is not feasible to include such items in the review process. They will be discarded if submitted as part of the application.

F. The Components and Order of an Application

To expedite the processing of applications, we request that you arrange the components of your application, **the original and two copies**, in the following order:

1. SF 424, Application for Federal Assistance.  
Note: The original copy of the application must have an original signature in item 18d on the SF 424;
2. SF 424A, Budget, accompanied by your budget justification;
3. SF 424B (Assurances);
4. The certification forms regarding lobbying, debarment, suspension, and other responsibility matters, and drug-free workplace requirements.
5. A copy of the applicant's indirect cost agreement, as necessary;

6. Project summary description;
7. Program narrative and timeline;
8. Organizational capability statement and vitae;
9. Letters of commitment from participating organizations and agencies;
10. A copy of the Check List of Application Requirements (See below) with all the completed items checked.

G. Completing the Application

In completing the application, please recognize that the set of standard forms and instructions is prescribed by the Office of Management and Budget and is not perfectly adaptable to the particulars of this program announcement. While reasonable care to avoid technical errors in completing the application is important and should be taken, it is the substantive merits of the project proposal that are the determining factors in funding decisions.

Please use the following guidance in preparing your application:

**1. SF 424 - Cover Page**

Complete only the items specified in the following instructions:

- |                |   |
|----------------|---|
| <u>Item 1.</u> | Mark “Non-Construction”   |
| <u>Item 2.</u> | Fill in the date you submitted the application. Leave the applicant identifier box blank.   |
| <u>Item 3.</u> | Not applicable.   |
| <u>Item 4.</u> | Leave blank.  |
| <u>Item 5.</u> | Provide the legal name of the applicant; the name of the primary organizational unit that will undertake the project; the applicant address; and the name and telephone number of the person to contact on matters related to this application. |
| <u>Item 6.</u> | Enter the employer identification number (FEIN) of the applicant organization as assigned by the Internal Revenue Service. If known, include the FEIN suffix.   |
| <u>Item 7.</u> | Mark appropriate letter.  |



- Item 8. Mark “New”
- Item 9. Name of Federal Agency is: “Administration on Aging.”
- Item 10. Preprinted on form.
- Item 11. The project title should describe concisely the nature of the project proposal. Avoid repeating the title of the program announcement or the name of the applicant. Try not to exceed 10 to 12 words and 120 characters including spaces and punctuation.
- Item 12. List only the largest political entities affected (i.e. State, counties, etc.)
- Item 13. Enter an appropriate start date
- Item 14. List the applicant's Congressional District and any Congressional Districts directly affected by the proposed project.
- Item 15. All budget information entered under item #15 should cover only the first 12 months of the project. The applicant should show the federal support requested under sub-item 15a. Sub-items 15b-15e are considered cost-sharing or "matching funds". Applicants should review cost sharing or matching principles contained in Subpart G of 45 CFR Part 74 before completing not just Item 15, but the Budget Information Sections A, B and C that follow. It is important that the dollar amounts entered in sub-items 15b-15f total at least 25 percent of the total project cost (total project cost is equal to the requested federal funds plus funds from non-federal sources).
- In general, costs borne by the applicant and cash contributions of any and all third parties involved in the project, including sub-grantees, contractors and consultants, are considered cash matching funds. Generally, most contributions from third parties will be non-cash (i.e. in-kind). Examples include volunteered time and use of facilities to hold meetings or conduct project activities. A third form of non-federal match, is projected program income derived from activities of the project such as participant fees and sale of publications. Only program income that is to be used as part of the qualifying match should be shown here.
- Item 16. Mark “No,” this program is not covered by E.O. 12372.
- Item 17. This question applies to the applicant organization, not the person who signs as the authorized representative. Categories of debt include delinquent audit disallowances, loans and taxes.

Item 18. To be signed by an authorized representative of the applicant organization. A document attesting to sign-off authority must be on file in the applicant's office. Failure to provide a signed original document will result in rejection of the application.

2. **SF 424A (2 pages pre-printed forms)** see detailed instructions above (Part I).

3. **Budget Justification (up to 4 pages)** See detailed instructions above for each item.

4. **SF 424B – Assurances**

SF 424B, Assurances -- Non-Construction Programs, contains assurances required of applicants under AoA's Title IV Grant Programs. Please note that a duly authorized representative of the applicant organization must certify that the applicant is in compliance with these assurances. Failure to provide a signed original document will result in rejection of the application.

5. **Certification Forms**

Certifications are required of the applicant regarding (a) lobbying; (b) debarment, suspension, and other responsibility matters; and (3) drug-free workplace requirements. Please note that a duly authorized representative of the applicant organization must attest to the applicant's compliance with these certifications. Failure to provide a signed original document will result in rejection of the application.

6. **Project Summary Description**

The project summary description (page one) begins the substantive part of the application. There should be two headings:

1. The name of the applicant organization as shown in SF 424, item 5; and
2. National Legal Assistance and Elder Rights Projects. Please limit the summary description to no more than 1200 characters.

Outline the objectives of the proposed project, the approaches to be used and the outcomes expected. At the end of the summary, list major products that will result from the proposed project (such as manuals, data collection instruments, training packages, audio-visuals, software packages). The project summary description, together with the information on the SF 424, becomes the project "abstract" which is entered into the AoA computer database. The project description provides the reviewer with an introduction to the substantive parts of the application. Therefore, care should be taken to produce a summary that accurately reflects the proposal.

7. **Program Narrative**

The Program Narrative is the critical part of the application. Applicants are expected to demonstrate a thorough familiarity with the history, current status, and policy considerations bearing on future development of legal assistance and elder rights programs.

It should be clear, concise, and, of course, responsive to this program announcement. In describing your proposed project, make certain that you respond fully to the evaluation criteria and have addressed the expectations. The organization of the narrative might well, in fact, parallel the evaluation criteria, beginning with an integrated discussion of (A) the project's purpose(s), relevance, significance, and responsiveness to the program announcement, which answers the questions of why the proposed project should be undertaken and what it intends to accomplish. The next section of the narrative provides a detailed explanation of (B) the approach(es) the project will follow to achieve its purpose(s), leading to a discussion of (C) the operational strategies and outcomes/results/benefits of the proposed project and how these will be disseminated and utilized. The narrative concludes with (D) the level of effort needed to carry out the project, in terms of the Project Director and other key staff, funding, and other resources.

**8. Organizational Capability Statement and Vitae for Key Project Personnel**

The organizational capability statement should describe how the applicant agency (or the particular division of a larger agency which will have responsibility for this project) is organized, the nature and scope of its work and/or the capabilities it possesses. This description should cover capabilities of the applicant agency not included in the program narrative, such as any current or previous relevant experience and/or the record of the project team in preparing cogent and useful reports, publications, and other products. If appropriate, include an organization chart showing the relationship of the project to the current organization. Include short vitae for key project staff only. Also include information about any contractual organization(s) that will have a significant role(s) in implementing project and achieving project goals.

**9. Letters of Commitment From Participating Organizations and Agencies**

Include confirmation of the commitments to the project (should it be funded) made by essential collaborating organizations and agencies in this part of the application. Any organization that is specifically named to have a significant role in carrying out the project should be considered an essential collaborator. Letters of Commitment are part of the 30-page application limit.

**10. Checklist for a Complete Application**

You should complete checklist below and include it in your application package. It will help make sure you have not overlooked anything.

## **APPLICATION CHECKLIST**

I have checked my application package to ensure that it includes or is in accord with the following:

- ☐ One original application plus two copies, with the SF 424 as the first page of each copy of the application;
- ☐ SF 424A - Budget Information (and accompanying Budget Justification);
- ☐ SF 424B - Assurances; and Certifications (including signed original);
- ☐ SF 424 has been completed according to the instructions, signed and dated by an authorized official (item 18) (including signed original);
- ☐ A copy of the current indirect cost rate agreement approved by the Department of Health and Human Services or another federal agency;
- ☐ Project Summary description;
- ☐ Program narrative;
- ☐ Organizational capability statement and vitae for key personnel;
- ☐ Letters of commitment and cooperation, as appropriate;
- ☐ Completed Checklist